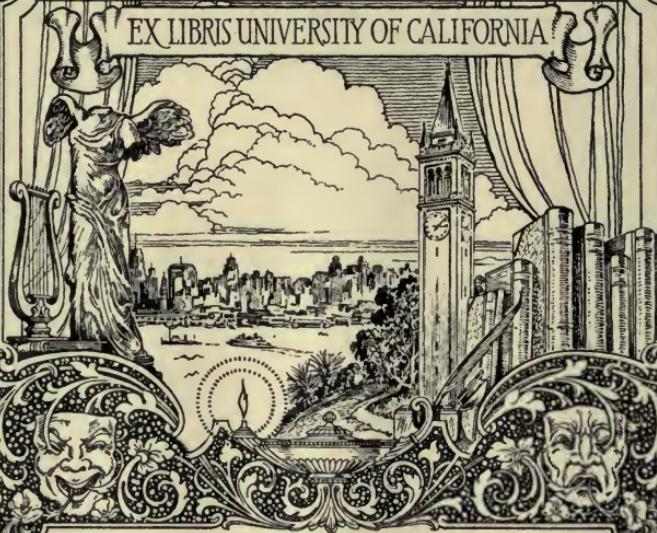


ABELARD AND HELOISE

BY

ELLA C. BENNETT

EX LIBRIS UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA



JOHN HENRY NASH LIBRARY

◆ SAN FRANCISCO ◆

PRESENTED TO THE

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

ROBERT GORDON SPROUL, PRESIDENT.

◆ BY ◆

MR. AND MRS. MILTON S. RAY
CECILY, VIRGINIA AND ROSALYN RAY

AND THE

RAY OIL BURNER COMPANY

SAN FRANCISCO

NEW YORK

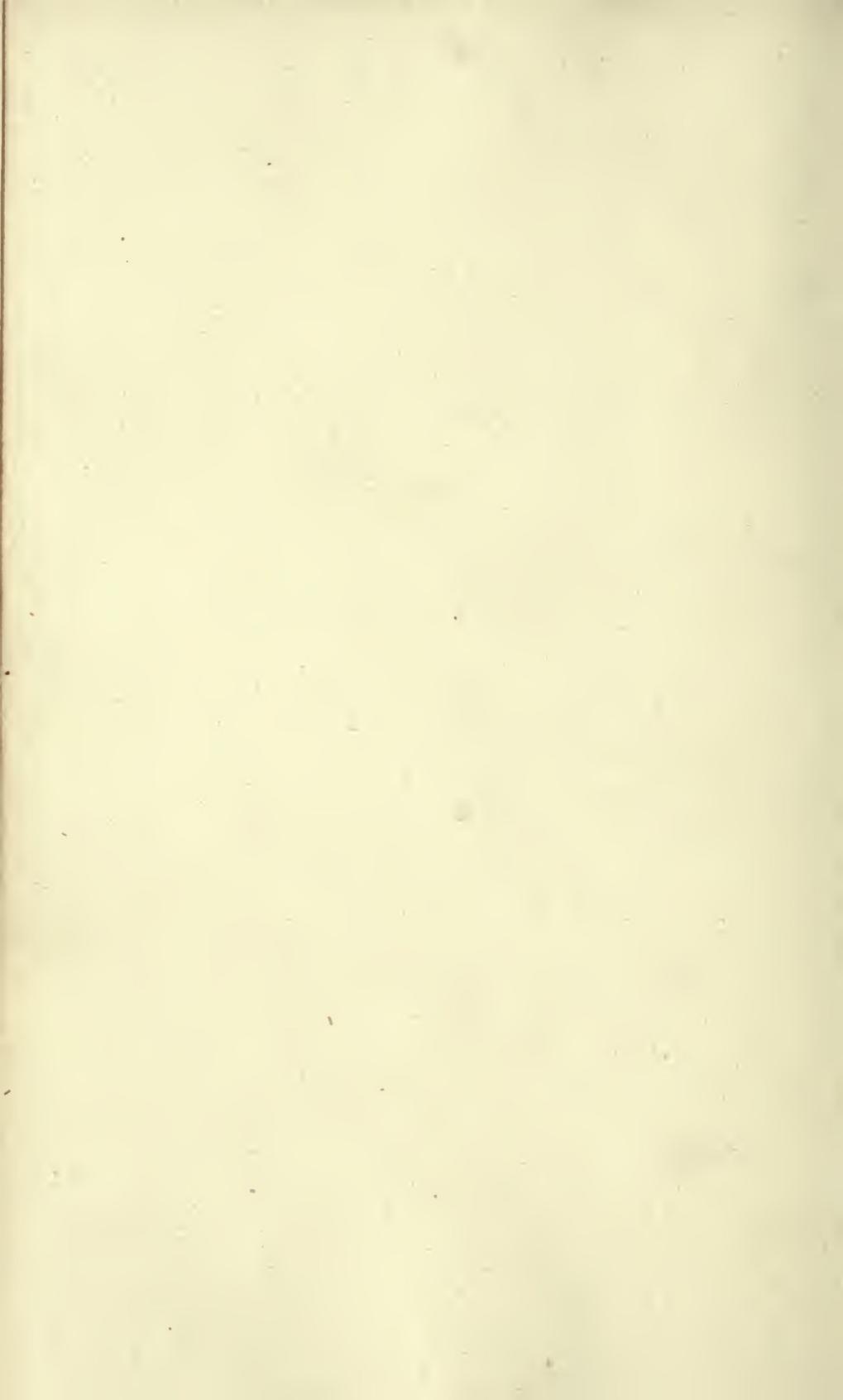


TYP
Z 239.2
T66
1907a

✓
5
M

Paul Elmer
Publisher

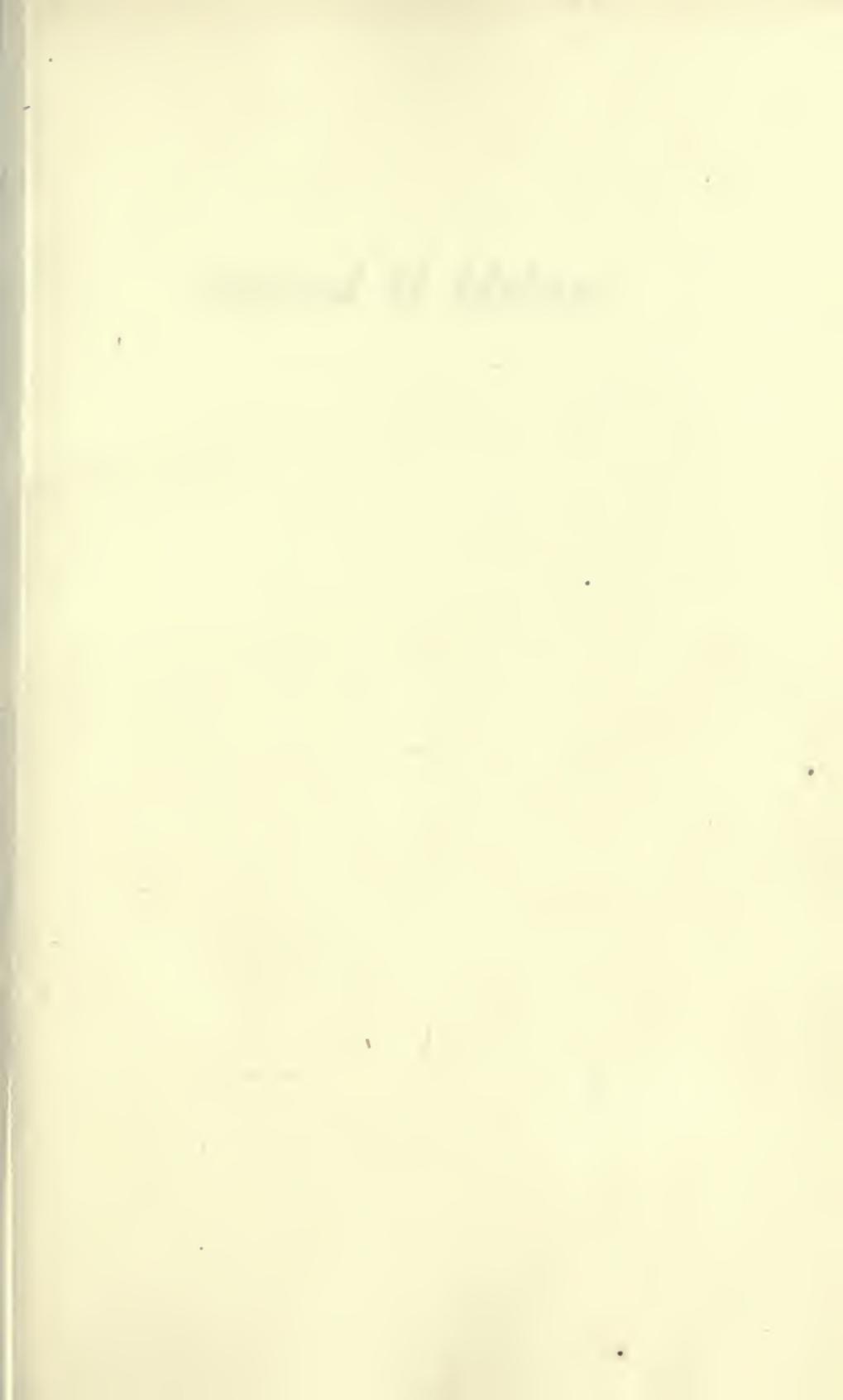
John Young & Rose
Printer





Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2007 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation





Abelard & Heloise





Copyright 1907 by Paul Eldar and Company

Abelard & Heloise

*The Love Letters
A Poetical Rendering
By Ella C. Bennett*

*The Frontispiece done in Photogravure
from an Oil Painting by Will Jenkins*



*Paul Elder & Company
San Francisco and New York*

*Copyright, 1907
by Paul Elder and Company*

*Affectionately Dedicated
To My Friend
Constance Mattingly*



The Introduction

The story of Abelard and Heloise is too well known to need repetition here, for these two rank with the few great historic lovers of the world, as well they may.

The love of Heloise was sublime in its intensity, romantic in its constancy, appealing in its pathos, and tragic in its suffering.

The lives and love-letters of Abelard and Heloise, by Wright, are most beautifully written, and well worth the reading. In his delineation of the character of Abelard, he condones, to some extent, his apparent coldness of heart, for which other writers have mercilessly scored him. Wright reads between the lines, and shows a word here and there in the letters of Abelard, to prove that though his love burned not with the brilliancy which marked that of the tender, passionate Heloise, the flames were never wholly extinguished, but merely sunk in magnitude by comparison with that which nothing surpassed.

The Introduction

Mr. Wright leaves the letters (the actual letters of the famous lovers) where the record of love ends, and dry controversies, advice and explanations begin. I have followed his excellent example, making no attempt to put into verse that which is so unsuited to it. Abelard and Heloise corresponded until the death of the former. For many years in the latter part of their lives, letters were confined strictly to theological and religious subjects, and to the welfare of the convent protected in those turbulent times by the name of Abelard. His was at one time the grandest and most commanding figure in France. He, like Mark Antony, lost an empire for a woman, but this time a worthy one, for whose love an empire were well lost.

Abelard's fame had spread not only in France but over all Europe. He was renowned as the greatest orator, the broadest theologian, and the most learned logician of his time. He was the first theologian to bring logic to bear as the greatest bulwark to the faith, and students of the civilized world flocked to France to hear him. His love-songs, dedicated to Heloise, were the popular songs of the day, and won fame for her, and both censure and praise for the daring, passionate, brilliant Abelard.

In my early youth I read somewhat of these great lovers, and it left on my mind an impression of

The Introduction

sympathy and admiration; and that it has so affected countless others for centuries, is evidenced by the fact that never are their graves without flowers. Love will ever appeal to the better side of human nature; and though its name has been dragged in the mire by grosser passions masquerading in the reflected light of its splendor, true love will ever remain—what it has always been—the sweetest thing in the world.

I have not tried to keep in touch with, nor in any way follow, the originals, except as to sentiment, upon which thread this rosary of my love-letters has been strung.

I give these love-letters to the public with the hope that any fault of diction, or rhythmic license, will be forgiven for the love I bear the memory of the unhappy Heloise, as we forgive her her sin, for the love she bore Abelard.

E. C. B.



Heloise to Abelard

*My Abelard, my love, my own adored!
When last I wrote to thee my soul I poured,
In all its grief and anguish from my heart—
O Abelard, my love, why did we part?
Why didst thou bide thyself in gloomy cell,
And banish me, 'til earth seemed part of Hell?
And my last letter! O not answered yet!
I cannot for one single hour forget
That we were one. At night from dreams I call
Thy name aloud, in pain, then like a pall,
The ceiling of my cell o'er caps my view,—
And visions fade again that brought me you!*

* * * *

*Think you at night when at my prayers I kneel,
That only thoughts celestial through me steal?*

I

Heloise to Abelard

*Think you the sound of orisons divine
Can banish that lost bliss—that you were mine?
That once you loved me, we together slept,
Together laughed and loved, together wept;
Together shared each joy, each pain, each thought?
O Abelard! come see the wreck that's wrought
By thine own absence. See how wan my face—
Come, smile upon me; wipe away the trace
Of grief and wretchedness. O come to me,
And love would make me bloom again for thee!
I cannot feel as thou, that love is sin,
Nor didst thou say so when thou sought to win.
If it was sophistry that made me yield,
'Twas thine, my Abelard. Too late to shield
Me from the shame that sophistry has wrought
(Nor grieved I, for that love so dearly bought)
If it must rob me of the one I crave,
And bury me alive within this grave:
A half-repentant, whose poor heart is torn
By each conflicting thought, whose brain is worn
By futile arguments of right and wrong,*

Heloise to Abelard

*That bring no satisfaction. And the gong
That summons me to prayer, but makes me start—
A guilty thing, whose rapid beating heart
Was pulsing, not from thoughts of the Divine,
But for past bliss, that Abelard was mine!*

* * * *

*I feel a hypocrite within this place,
When every other nun's celestial face
Reminds me that my heart is not at rest,
Is out of harmony with these—the blest.
I am not wicked, and I am not good
As these pure nuns around me, and I would
Be in my place, my own, where I belong,
There at thy side, thy wife, amid the throng
Whose duties call them hence, and here and there,
Not in a cloistered cell at constant prayer.
I am not good enough—I cannot feel
That calm renunciation, when I kneel,
That exiles all the world, its joys, its love,
And centers every thought on Him above!
I am not of His saints—I cannot be,*

Heloise to Abelard

*I, like the publican—enough for me
To kneel afar, and bumbly own my sin,
And by humility some favor win.
Hypocrisy appalls me; when I think
Of these pure nuns around me, dear, I shrink
At my unworthiness, my severed heart,
A fragment to the Lord, and thou a part!
What has been done can never be undone—
And though thy vow was broken—we are one!*

* * * *

*I am not good,—no more, my love, art thou,
Else thou wouldest ne'er have broken thy great vow
To live a celibate. But it was done,—
Thy human nature had the conquest won;
And thou didst turn to me, didst woo and plead,
Declaring that thy heart of mine had need—
I yielded prejudice for love of thee:
And now I ask thee, do as much for me!
Throw off thy cassock, leave thy gloomy cell
And come with me, my Abelard, to dwell
In peace and comfort, and we two be one—*

Heloise to Abelard

*It is too late to change what has been done.
I am thy wife, thou art my husband, dear,
What is there, that we have not known, to fear?
I cannot serve two masters—nay, nor be
Partitioned off between my God and thee!
O I could serve Him better as thy wife
Than in these convent walls with broken life,
A thing unworthy of the name of nun,
A soul that's ne'er at peace—a body won
By thee, my Abelard,—then come and claim
Tby Heloise, dear, who should bear thy name!*

* * * *

*'Tis late, my love, the candle's burning low,
Yet do I write as loathe to let thee go;
For while I write, I seem to feel thee near—
I almost think thy deep-toned voice I bear.
I say good night, I will not say farewell,
For I shall wait thee in my convent cell:
For thou wilt come to me, thou must, thou must,
And take me from abode of saints, where dust
Seems hallowed by their presence, e'en while I*

Heloise to Abelard

*Do move amongst them as a living lie!
I am not pure enough,—come, dearest, come
And take me as thou promised, to a home,
And hold me in thine arms, and call me fair,
And kiss my neck, my lips, my arms, my hair,
As once you used to do, for I am thine,
And broken vows but make thee surer mine!
The candle's last faint gleam—there is no light—
I will not say farewell—I say good night.*



Abelard to Heloise

*My Sister in the Lord: dear Heloise!
Peace be unto thee, ever, ever, peace!
I bear reports of thy good judgment, dear,
I know so well thy virtue, that I fear
No fall from grace, no move I'd not approve—
And how thy wisdom wins the constant love
Of those about thee. This, my Heloise,
Who, too impatient, sighs for her release
From convent walls. To what, to what, I ask?
Thrust off the old to take on what new task?
A lighter, worldly burden wouldest thou bear?
There is no spot upon the earth where care
Can enter not, nor where it holds not sway;
It is omnipotent, its right of way
Marked from the first. And each life bath its own;*

Abelard to Heloise

We enter, and we leave the earth with moan!

* * * *

*Of joy we tasted, Heloise, of sin;
We did not seek a better thing to win,
But now a chance is given, dear, repent;
I feel God's chastisement was mercy sent.
A few more years, and all our pain is o'er,
The path marked out leads onward to the door
Of bliss eternal. What is life but pain?
I would not live it o'er again to gain
The transitory joys, for life at best
Is but a struggle for eternal rest.
There's much that I would tell thee, Heloise:
Of late I have not had a day of peace,
But bitter persecution. Hatred's spear
Hath pierced my life, and driven me, my dear,
From old-time haunts, where oft my voice was
raised
To youth instruct, as in the old-time days
When first we met. And jealousy hath sting
So poignant that the wounded bird takes wing*

Abelard to Heloise

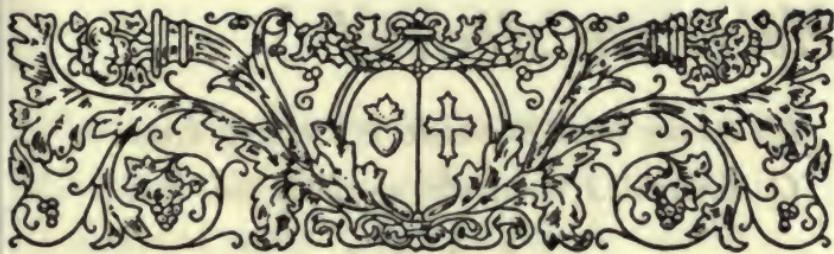
*And flies to any haven where is peace,
And from earth's prejudice gain some release.
Thus envy bath so conquered, and I yield,
And take humiliation for my shield.*

*For have I not let pride my bosom swell,
And bung my soul above abyss of Hell?
I know my weakness, aye, in many ways,
I proved my lack of strength in former days;
In pride of fame, in passion, lust and love,
I armed myself against my God above.*

*I ruined thy life, Heloise, and mine,
Swerved from my higher purpose and design.
I have deserved my fall, too well, and yet—
The human in me makes me still regret
The fall from eminence that once I held.
Now like a mighty oak, weak, I lie felled,
Prone on the ground, a thing for man's contempt,—
And yet why should I hope to be exempt?
The just have fallen—they who did not sin—
And why should Abelard e'er hope to win
Exemption from the law—exception be,*

Abelard to Heloise

*Because too wilful, blind, I would not see.
Pray thou for me, my sister Heloise,
That from my earthly pride I gain release.
Pray that I peace of mind at length attain—
Pray that my soul is not entirely slain
By sinful past. Pray ever, and pray on,
For one sweet ray of hope at final dawn!
Pray for thy fallen brother, still pray hard—
Pray for thy weak, repentant Abelard!*



Heloise to Abelard

*My Abelard! Thy letter came at last!
Renewing in me all the old sweet past,
And making all my hopes to thrive anew,
And filling all my mind with thoughts of you!
Again I see thy stalwart frame, thy face,
And, Abelard, I never can erase
The picture of thy gleaming eyes, thy smile;
And yet thou dost not come, and I meanwhile
Live o'er the past in dreams, and see thee, dear—
At times it is so real I feel thee near;
And then the awful thought—that thou art
far,
Rebellious passions rise until they mar
The peace I've striven to obtain, while here,—
No one I love, to wipe away a tear,*

Heloise to Abelard

*No loving hand to smooth my aching brow,—
O Abelard, I want thee—want thee now!*

* * * *

*How thou hast changed! One time my lightest
word*

*Would bring thee to my feet; yet have I heard
That now thou seemst content in cloistered cell,
And patiently repent, and all is well.*

*It is not so with me, my dear, ah, no,
If thou wouldest say the word—today—I'd go,
Rush forth from convent walls—again be free—
And speed my steps, my Abelard, to thee!*

* * * *

You counsel patience, penitence and prayer!

You counsel this too late, it is not fair!

*You roused my soul to bliss, and love, and life;
Then thrust me here in daily woe and strife,
While my poor heart in anguish still beats on,
Not wife, nor widow, nun—but all forlorn,—
A mixture of the three. It is too hard.*

You talk of patience, you, my Abelard!

Heloise to Abelard

*Where was your patience, e'er you won my heart,
To crush its sweetness out, and then depart?
I counseled patience then—'twas I, and now
You counsel patience—yet you broke your vow!
'Twas I respected Mother Church—not you—
A vow that's broken you cannot renew.
You do but mend it, still it shows the scar,
The seams are still apparent—you but mar
The beauty that it had before you fell—
Nor can you bide the truth in cloistered cell.
I am your wife, you owe it for my sake,
That you do not your second promise break.
You have no justice, Abelard, nay, nay,
Or you would not content you there to pray,
And leave your wife an exile from your heart;
Unjust and cruel, Abelard, to part
From thine own Heloise, thy love, thy wife!
O how it grieves me that my broken life
Should be the sacrifice that thou wouldest make
(Nor dost thou care if my poor heart should
break)!*

Heloise to Abelard

*To ease thy tortured conscience thou wouldest find
Some sacrifice, thy wife,—it is not kind.
Nor can I see how thy perverted sight
Can reconcile two wrongs to make a right.
O could I see thee, could I plead my side,
I would not need my Abelard to chide;
I would but show thee justice; thou wouldest see,
And, Abelard, my love, agree with me!
Good night, my love, a thousand times good
night—
All's still within the convent while I write;
My tears have spattered on the paper—see
How Heloise's heart doth bleed for thee!*



Abelard to Heloise

*My Sweetheart—Wife—My Sister in the Lord!
Should I throw off my cassock—loose the cord
That binds me to the church,—I ask, what then?
Should we renew the life that we began
With broken laws of God and man, in sin,
And ever hope forgiveness then to win?
My Heloise, 'tis best as we are now,
Each one to keep in holiness the vow
That binds to Christ, the merciful, the pure—
A few more years the prison cell endure
To gain eternal pardon, perfect peace—
A few more years on earth, and we release
Not only bodies from a prison cell,
But liberate our souls from fire of Hell!
You write of love of me, ab, think of Him*

Abelard to Heloise

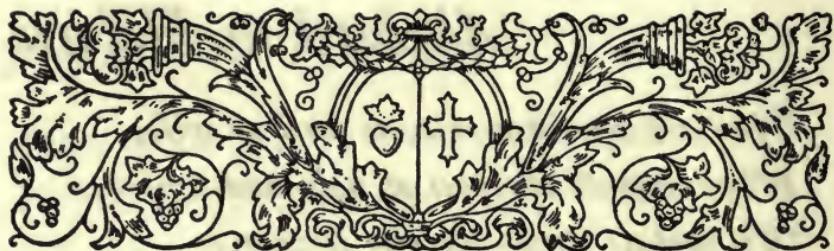
*Beside whose love my own seems pale and dim !
He died for thee, my sister, died for all.
My love a shadow—but a darkened pall
To cover o'er the passion underneath,
And let us bury 'neath a floral wreath
The earthly part of it: forget, forgive—
And for the long hereafter let us live !*

* * * *

*Poor Heloise ! Yes, yes, I know thy love was
great,
Was great, and e'er shall be, but still above
There is far greater; let us seek it hence,
And for all earthly woes gain recompense.
Thy youth was spoiled by me, thy blooming youth,
Yet did I love thee, Heloise, in truth.
Thy letters move me yet, more than I tell,
And yet I bid thee cease, it is not well
To rouse a sleeping lion, and thus renew
The passion that once conquered me,—and you.
Our thoughts should ever rest on Him above,
Nor seek renewal of the old-time love.*

Abelard to Heloise

*Thou art my sister now, as well as wife,
Why resurrect the past of pain and strife?
'Tis best as 'tis,—eternity is near,—
If we pursue this path, we've naught to fear.
Pray, pray for me! Nor ever cease to pray;
And let the burden of thy prayer,—the lay,—
Be meekest supplication, dear, for me;
Thy heart can love, and God will list to thee.
Pray on, my Heloise, pray, ever pray!
Nor let thy love of old one moment stay
Thy steps upon the path marked out, the right—
And pray for Abelard, thine own,— Good night!*



Heloise to Abelard

*My Abelard, my own, my love, my life!
At last you wrote me—“Sister, Sweetheart,
Wife!”*

*O call me what you will, I care not, so
A message comes to tell me that you know
I still live on, and live, my love, for thee,
To know that Abelard still thinks of me!
I'll pray, my Abelard,—but pray not well,
For thoughts of God are mixed with earth and
Hell.*

*Thy calm, sweet patience bids me still hope on,
To waken some day to a better dawn.
Meantime I seek what solace thou canst give,—
I need thy thoughts to die—or e'en to live.
While thou dost live I am not yet alone,*

Heloise to Abelard

*And though no wail I utter, and no moan
Reach to thine ear, still do I hope and wait,
And by thy letters calendar my date.*

* * * *

*Think of our child, my Abelard, thy child:
We have deserted it! It drives me wild—
To rob a child of mother and of sire,
Though every step on earth should bring us
higher*

*And nearer to that goal thou bidst me seek;
My motherhood too strong, religion weak
To bind me here; yet bath thy will ordained,
And thus to please thee have I still remained—
Delinquent in my prayers and love of God,
Rebellious when I feel His chastening rod.
My motherhood all stifled, think, and see—
To prove, my Abelard, my love for thee!
Whate'er my faults, whate'er my sin or crime,
Unwashable on earth—and left to time—
In one thing, Abelard, I have been true,
My love, my life, my all—I gave to you.*

Heloise to Abelard

*Nor can I once regret that old, sweet past;
I shall remember it 'til death. The last,
Faint, gasping breath that binds me to the world—
The dropping curtain, e'er my spirit—burled—
Spins into space, shall breathe thy hallowed name
That brought disgrace—and yet, that brought
me fame!*

*I'd rather be thy mistress than the wife
Of any king on earth, and be for life
Thine own companion, though it brought me shame,
For I would be thy wife, in all but name.*

* * * *

*I leave the path marked out, and write of love
When thou hast tried to turn my thoughts above.
It is so hard to keep them there. I try,
And say a prayer between each loving sigh.
That I am here—a nun—is that I still
Subserviate to thee, my love, my will;
'Tis that I fain would please, and fain obey,
Whatever path you mark, that is my way.
E'en though the thorns abound, I still plod on,*

Heloise to Abelard

And tread the weary way where others gone
Before me, trod, with meeker steps than mine;
I waver not, because my will is thine!
It would be well if I tried half as hard
To please my God, as to please Abelard!
If I am saved from Hell 'tis by His grace,
Not that I ever tried to win a place
In His abode of peace and love and light—
Not that I e'er was bad, but that my sight
Was blinded to all else, my love, but thee,
If thou approv'st, 'twas enough for me.
Nay, bere I write again of earthly things;
My spirit self too often doth take wings
And fly beyond my reach; my earthly part
Remains to concentrate itself in heart!
I will refrain from trespassing too far
Upon forbidden ground, lest I should mar
Our correspondence, lest you cease to write
And give me counsel in this long heart fight,
Between the earth and God. So mark you, dear,
I need your letters, for I feel you near,

Heloise to Abelard

*When such do come, to bid me hope and pray,—
I feel that thou art near, though far away.
Write often, then, my Abelard, nor cease
To counsel and to guide thy Heloise!*



Heloise to Abelard

*Again the post has come — no letter yet —
O Abelard, my love, canst thou forget
How thy poor Heloise awaits and prays
A missive from her own? How many days
Have come and gone since last your letter came!
Each day, without a letter, is the same —
A blank, a waste, a time that brings no peace,
And Heloise from sorrow — no release.
Thy letters are less frequent than of yore,
I almost daily o'er their pages pore,
Engraven on my heart is every line;
How long must I thus wait, and wait, and pine?
If that thou wilt not come to see me, dear,
If that I ne'er shall have thy presence near,
At least be frequent with the missives sent;*

Heloise to Abelard

*Give me that comfort, or my spirit rent
Will tear itself from body and go free—
And traverse all the earth to be with thee!
How time drags on from weary months to
years—*

*A daily record of but sighs and tears,
Nor work, nor prayers, nor sleep can e'er erase
The oft-recurring vision of thy face.*

* * * *

*Sometimes it seems to me as thou wert dead,—
Thy features strained and pallid, and thy head
Thrown back in rigid death, thy hand ice cold—
I, standing there beside thee, thus behold
My all laid low in death,—my heart congeals,
And through my veins a deathly coldness steals.
And then I cease to grieve, and stunned I kneel
Beside thy lifeless form, and then I feel
The end has come for me; I may live on
In body, but my spirit too has gone
To follow thine wherever it may lead,—
To Heaven or to Hell, there will it speed.*

Heloise to Abelard

To follow in thy wake, where'er that be—
'Twere happiness enough to be with thee!

* * * *

You'll think this blasphemous,—I know you
will,

And censure me for what I cannot still—
The yearning of my heart;—forget, forgive—
Remember that for you alone I live!

You are a man, you had your life apart;
I am a woman in whose lonely heart
One image stands supreme; I need not tell
You whose that image is, you know too well.
To you there was all France, to speak, to teach,
Your voice to other countries e'en did reach;
Your fame was widespread and your name had
grown

To rival kings and princes in renown.

I was a woman, brilliant, you have said,
Yet circumscribed by custom, as though dead:
To live alone, secluded and apart—
To live the life of women, by a chart

Heloise to Abelard

Mapped out by men:—“No farther shalt thou go”—

*I need not tell thee this, dear, for you know
Too well how circumscribed a woman's lot;
And if she varies by the smallest jot
From path marked out, the ruthless hand of man
Forever places on her brow a ban.*

*But you, my Abelard, ah, no, not you
Would hold from intellect, the praise, the due
Respect it should command, nor draw the line
Between my budding intellect and thine,—
But e'er encourage, lead, and e'er inspire
That intellect to study, and to higher
Flights of image, then into logic burled
And open to my intellect the world!*

*This not alone,—you taught me how to love:
What cared I that the world should disapprove?
In thee I had my all, yes, everything,
And all the world's contempt, or bitter sting,
Could rob me not of love, nor of thy mind
In whose strong depths I delved and e'er could find*

Heloise to Abelard

*The answer to each question I would ask,
And guidance for my every mental task.
The world's contempt or ban was naught to me—
I had my intellect,—and I had thee!
And other women's lots were doubly hard,
Because they had no love—like Abelard!
So few men understand a woman's heart—
They cannot enter in, nor be a part
Of all her aspirations, all her fears,
Nor understand, nor sympathize with tears!
'Twas different, though, with you; you understood
And sympathized as any woman could.
Your intellect so broad, so deep, so grand,
Accepted not from other men command,
But marked your path and made your views the
first.
The world looked on, applauded thee,—and
cursed;
Yet did you tower above them,—go your way—
The rest to follow in your path, or stay
By old traditions bound, by custom bent,*

Heloise to Abelard

*While thou a target for their spiteful vent.
Or else the goal which all would seek to reach,
They bent before thee, when you rose to teach!*

* * * *

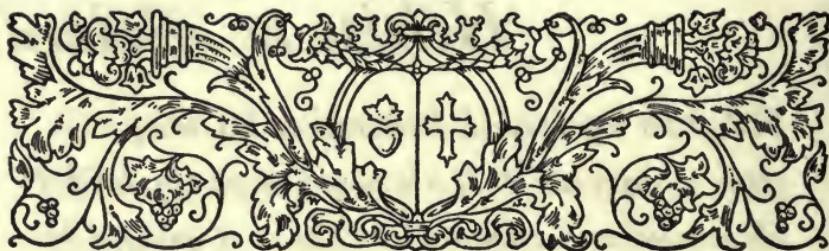
*My Abelard, my own, my name still rings
In harmony through music when there sings
A lover to the woman he adores,
And in his rapture, in his passion, pours
Thy love flights to her ear,—these were for me,
The Heloise, beloved, dear, by thee!*

* * * *

*Last night, as on my way, on mercy bent,
I heard a man's strong voice to this give vent:
“My Heloise, I ne'er could love but thee”—
The song, remember, that you wrote to me;
The song that France has echoed and re-sung
Vibrated on the evening air and rung
Clear, true and sweet! A lover poured his soul
Out in thy music, Abelard, the goal—
A sweet, fair maiden leaning out to hear
Her lover's song. I listened, and a tear*

Heloise to Abelard

*Fell from my eye. I hastened to his side,
And whispered: "Is the maid to be thy bride?"
He smiled and answered, "Yes." I pressed his
hand,*
*And said, "I am thy friend, thine to command.
I knew the Abelard who wrote that song,
I knew that Heloise, who once did wrong—
She loved him so—she loves him yet—and you?"
He stooped and kissed my hand—perhaps he knew
Or guessed the nun beside him, now so moved,
Had been the woman Abelard had loved.
I hurried to the convent, wept and prayed
For this fond lover and the sweet, pure maid;
Prayed that they too might wed and happy be,
Not separated, dear, like you from me;
Prayed that their lives might never be so marred
As those of Heloise and Abelard.*



Heloise to Abelard

*Poor Abelard! The record that you wrote
To our dear friend—enclosing me a note—
Has been perused by me. I read it all,
From first to finish, and my soul would call
Thee to me, dear, for sympathy. My own,
The years have parted us, and you have grown
Away from me, and bid from me your grief,
From which, in vain, you tried to find relief.
These persecutions that you write of, dear,
At every line I read brought forth a tear.
My sympathy is yours,—you know that well,—
I have no need my constancy to tell.
Thou greatest on the earth! My own adored!
To think that malediction has been poured
Upon thy head by pygmies, mental swine!*

Heloise to Abelard

*What is their intellect compared with thine?
These persecute thee! Envy play a game
To thrust thee from thy pinnacle of fame!
To crush thee 'neath its feet,—this rabble
crowd,—*

*Oh, I could pour my blood and cry aloud
For vengeance on the same! Thy spirit crushed!
At every line I read, my passion gushed
With anger and rebellion! I, a nun!
An abbess—others under me—the one
Least worthy e'er to rule or guide! Ab, well,
I know not if my journey end at Hell,
Or if divine compassion touch my soul
And wipe away my record as a whole.
I know my soul is turbulent,—my mind
Seeks still in vain that perfect peace to find.
These nuns around me—each with sainted face—
Look up to me! I, truly out of place!
The one impure amongst them! One weak soul
Amid that throng who only seek one goal.
And still they love me! Yes, unworthy I!*

Heloise to Abelard

*And still I struggle, still I try, and try,
To be as one of them, as meek, as pure,
And strive to bear with patience and endure
My exiled life. You praise me so, my dear,
You flatter thus my vanity, I fear.
For praise from you will ever be to me
As music to my ears, as harmony,
The sweetest I could bear, though undeserved,
And some have missed that praise who never
swerved*

*From virtue's path, nor ever fell,—yet I
Receive it, and my heart with joy leaps high
At any word of praise from thee, my own,—
Thy lightest word of censure brings a moan.
In all the record of your broken life
You blame yourself and never blame your wife,
My noble, generous Abelard, my own!
I thank you that you so my part condone.
Yet in the fall I own my share of blame,
For I it was who helped to blast your name.
Had I been stronger, and not yielded then*

Heloise to Abelard

*Unto your fascinations,—it had been
Far different. Still would your voice be heard
In learning's rostrum, and your lightest word
Would seem a dictum of inspired command;
Still would the every gesture of your hand
Be grace and manliness—still would you be
The man most marked in France's destiny !
Still would you be an orator divine
If, Abelard, you had not then been mine !
Do I regret it? No, a thousand noes—
Not all the misery, not all the woes
That heaped upon me in the years now sped
Could make me wish our hearts had not been wed!
Oh, it is selfish, yes, I own, I own,
And that I should such selfishness bemoan.
And yet I do not! Nor will e'er resign
The blissful thought—that Abelard was mine !
Was mine alone—the greatest of his age!
And in my life of sorrow that one page
Gleams pure and true for me: a steady light
That burns eternal in the darkened night*

Heloise to Abelard

*Of thy poor Heloise's broken life;
Who was content as mistress—or as wife:
But was all Abelard's! And now—and now!
Ah, Heloise doth fill a different vow!
A vow of chastity—of purest love,
A vow to seek but that which leads above.
How illy she doth fill it well she knows,—
My kind confessor ofttyme guides and shows
Me how to persevere, and how to hope,
And with his kindly counsel widens scope
For future things. Thus will I grow
Better as time goes on,—I feel and know
I was not for this life; but God is wise,
I will not question if He thus chastise.
I promise, Abelard, not once again
Will I refer to this, and waken pain
Again to action, nor again renew
A buried theme on which I know that you
Look with askance; I will your counsel take,
Avoiding that which could an echo wake
Of things long silenced, dead and buried quite,*

Heloise to Abelard

*Down, down, so deep the faintest ray of light
Ne'er enters to its tomb. Did I say, dead?
That time of love—and later when we wed?
Nay, dead is not the word; it is not so;
Say what you will, but, Abelard, I know
It did not die—though to that thought we strive;
We buried it—we buried it—Alive!*

* * * *

*Well, I have done with themes we know too well;
Hereafter, any thoughts of such I quell
And write of treatises, of sermons, text.
I thank you for the last you sent—the next
Will be awaited by the nuns and I
With deepest gratitude. We ever try
To follow your advice. Your generous aid
In gaining us the convent is repaid
By prayer incessant for your welfare, dear.
If prayers could win you Heaven, you need not
fear
To meet your God, nor leave this earth of sin,
But your own self, by kindness, Heaven win.*

Heloise to Abelard

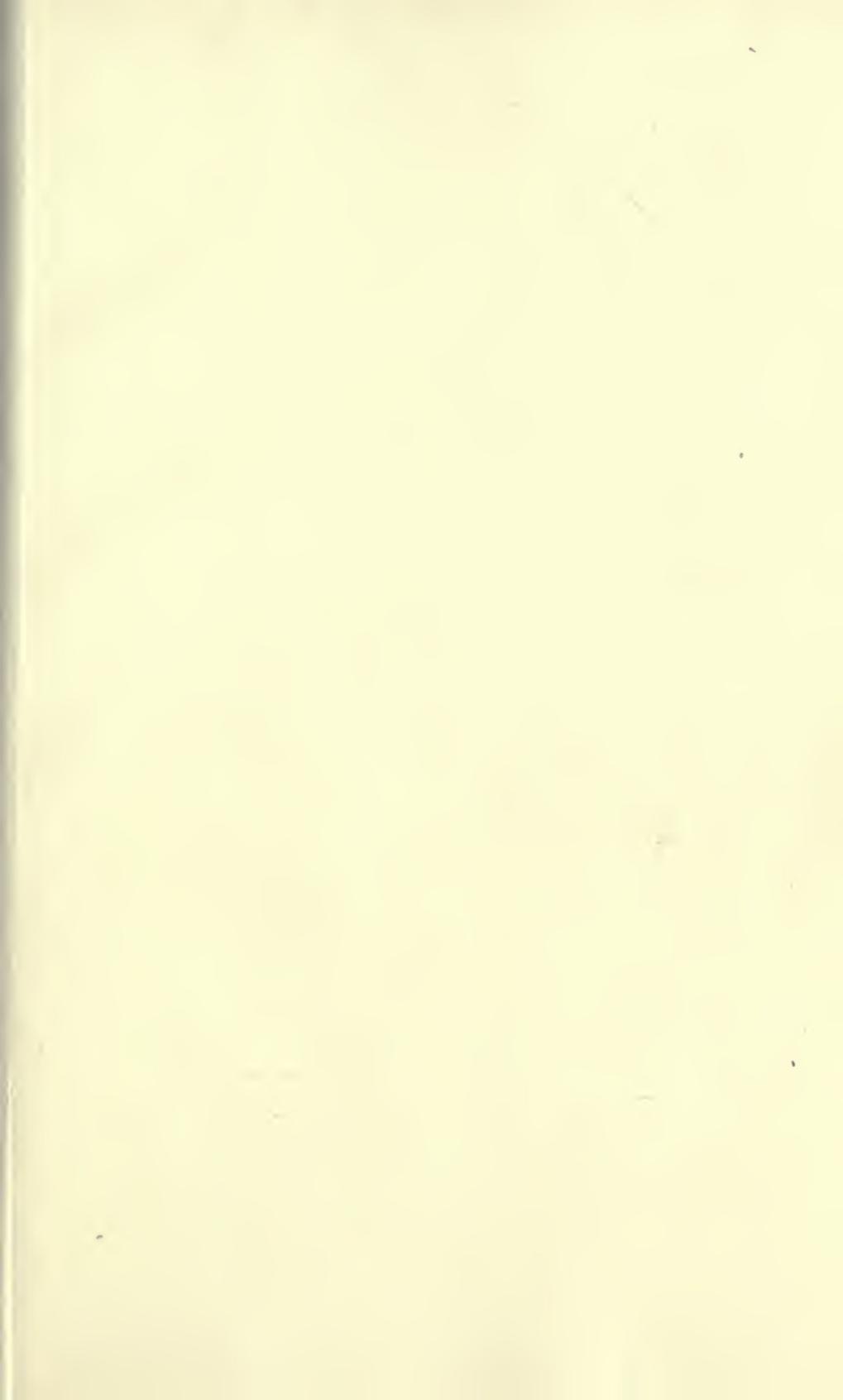
*Good night—my Abelard—good night—good
night,*

*Your Heloise shall never more indite
A letter such as this has been—the last
That tore the veil again from that old past.
I ask forgiveness, and your patience, dear,
For dragging you again unto that bier
That holds our buried love, the old sweet dreams,—
Hereafter I shall write of other themes.
And yet tonight I linger, as of yore,
Above the page on which my soul I pour,
With one last look, one touch, one fond caress,
One final long deep sigh, and one God Bless!*

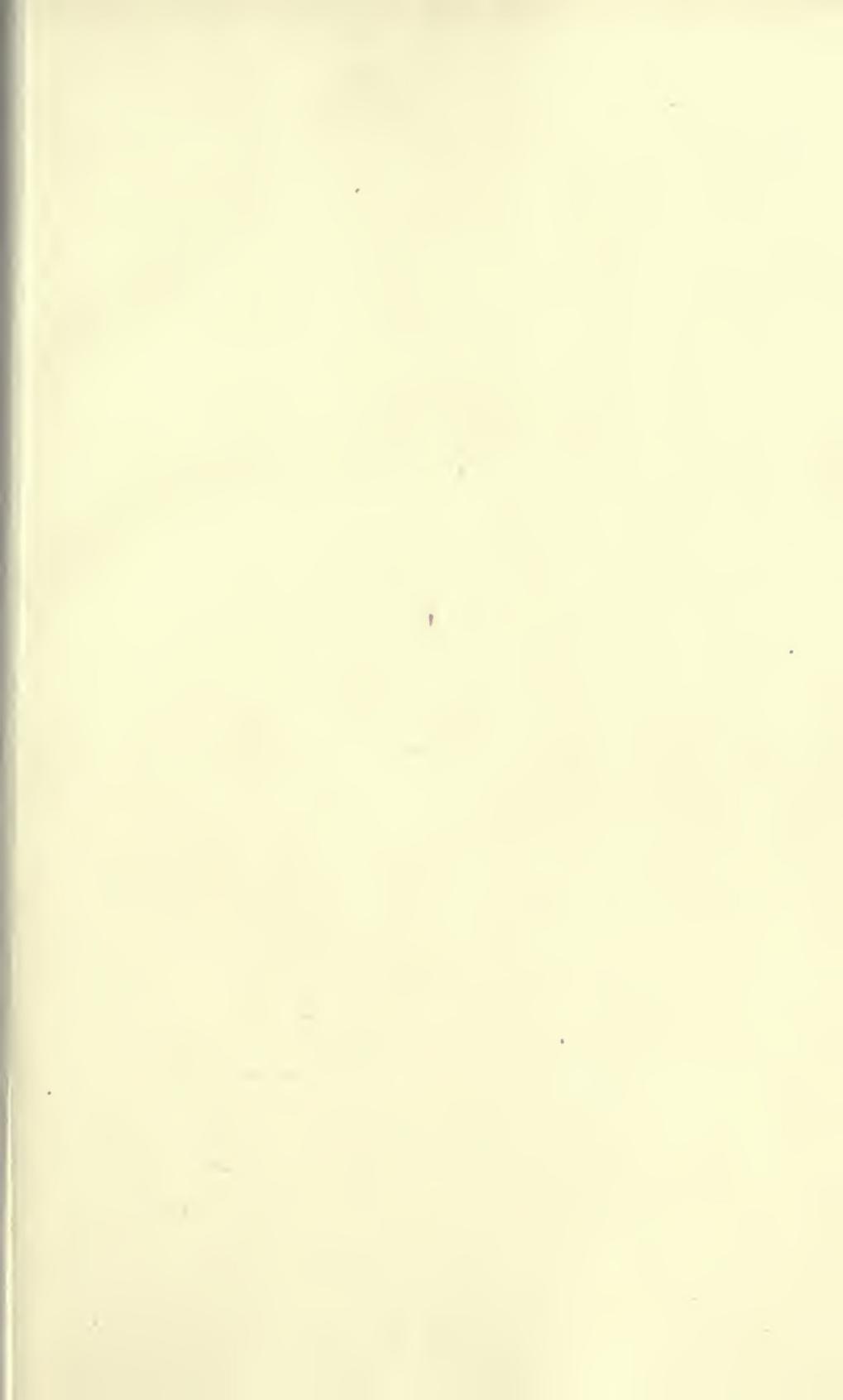
regarding small-scale production techniques associated with small-scale agriculture with those of a diversified crop mix with intercropping or agroforestry systems. This study will also help to understand the potentialities and constraints of small-scale agriculture in the production of both organic and inorganic manures. The results can also assist small-scale farmers to diversify their cropping systems by combining different agricultural techniques and technologies. Crop diversification techniques can be adopted with small-scale farmers and they can make more use of available resources, thus, the re-

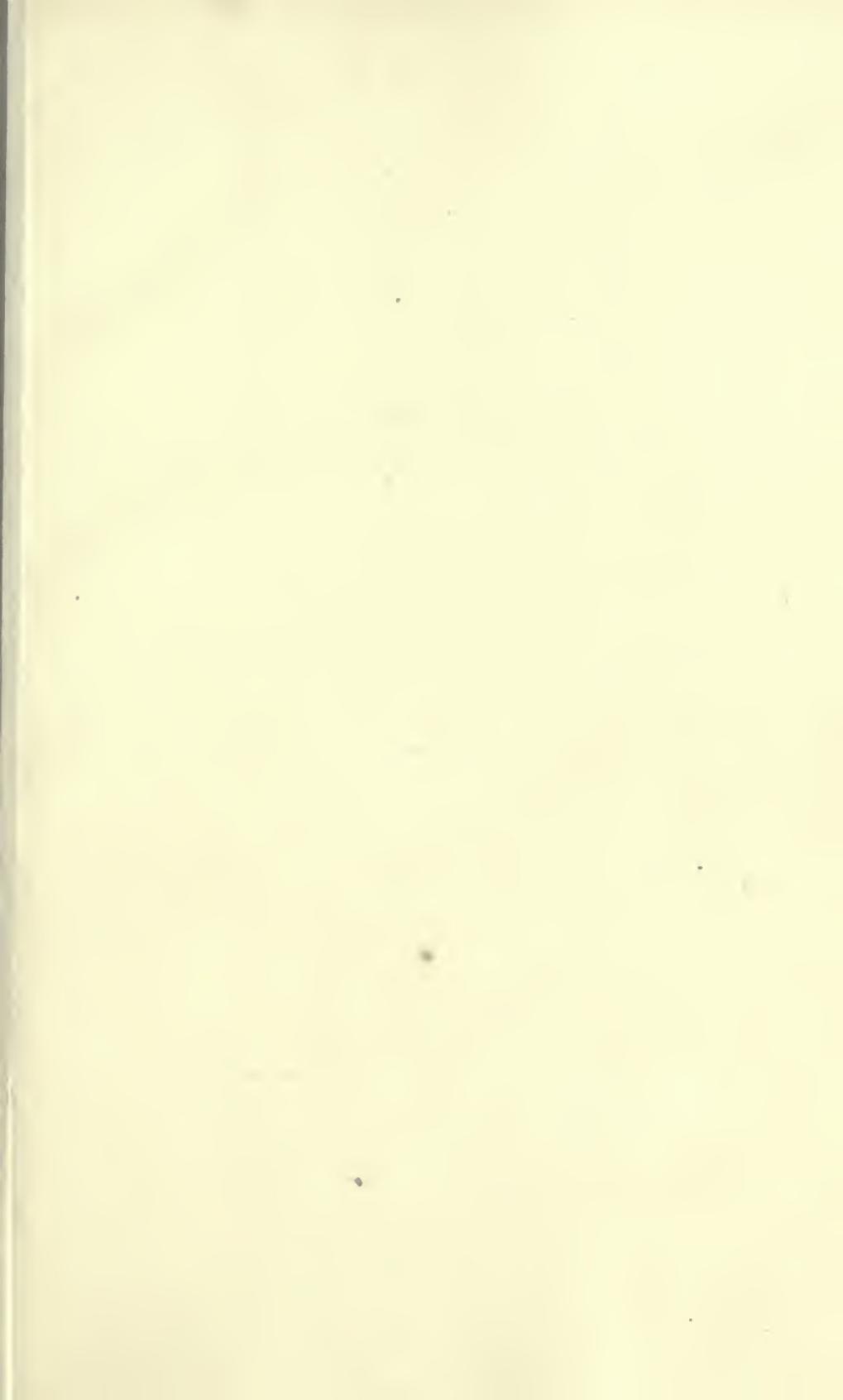
*Here ends Abelard & Heloise, The Love Letters
Rendered in Verse by Ella Costillo Bennett. The
Frontispiece done in Photogravure from an Oil
Painting by Will Jenkins. The Typography
designed by J. H. Nash. Of this First Edition
Five Hundred Copies have been printed upon
Arches Handmade Paper. Published by Paul
Elder & Company and done into a book for
them at The Tomoye Press, New York City
in the year Nineteen Hundred and Seven*













14P
Z239.2
T66
1907a.

